



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



Malone B. 144



3- Koxb. B. by Barker. [Hides,] Sale & Entry
July 1820
26-

by Chris Molloy

Malone. B. 144.

THE

Half-Pay OFFICERS;

A

COMEDY:

As it is ACTED

By His Majesty's Servants

Nullum est jam dictum, quod non dictum sit prius
Terence



L O N D O N:

Printed for A. Bettefworth, and W. Boreham
in Pater-Noster-Row, T. Fauncy, at the Ang
without Temple-Bar, and J. Brotherton and
W. Meadows in Cornhill. 1720. (Pr. 1 s

OFFICE OF THE

SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY

WASHINGTON

DECEMBER 1917

NAVY DEPARTMENT



NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

DECEMBER 1917



P R E F A C E.



THIS Thing was brought upon the Stage with no other Design, but that of shewing Mrs. FRYAR, the House being willing to encourage any thing, by which it might propose to entertain the Town; therefore the Author, or rather the Transcriber, did not think himself any way concern'd in its Success, as to the Reputation of a Writer; I say Transcriber, the greatest Part of it being old: The Part of Mrs. Fryer is in an Old Play, call'd

P R E F A C E.

Love and Honour, which she acted when she was Young, and which was imprinted in her Memory, she could repeat it every Word; and it was to an accidental Conversation with her, this Farce ow'd its Being; she acted with so much Spirit and Life, before two or three Persons who had some Interest with the House, that we judg'd it wou'd do upon the Stage; she was prevail'd upon to undertake it; upon which this Farce was immediately projected, and finish'd in Fourteen Days; it was got up with so much Hurry, that some of the Comedians, who are allow'd to be Excellent in their Way, had not time to make themselves Masters of their Parts; therefore not being perfect in the Dialogue, they could not act with that Freedom and Spirit, they are observ'd to do, upon other Occasions.

T H E

P R E F A C E. V

THE Character of *Fluellin* has been esteem'd, (next to that of Sir *John Falstaff*) the best and most humorous, that *Shakespear* ever wrote; there are many other Things in this, that have been reckon'd good Comedy: This we may venture to say, without incurring the Censure of vain; for it can be no Offence to Modesty, for a Man to commend what is not his own: We have us'd the Town in this, as a Draper does his Customers, he shews them a Pattern before he sells his Cloth, so we give them this Essay of the Old Gentlewoman, that if they like the Sample, they may have the whole Piece: It is by such Experiments as these, the Taste of the Town must be found out; therefore it is the Business of the Stage to give you New Patterns every Day, in order to discover what it is that will take you.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION

500 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N. Y.

1897

1898

1899

1900

1901

1902

1903

1904

1905

1906

1907

1908

1909

1910

1911

1912

1913

1914

1915

1916

1917

PROLOGUE.

AT Rome of Old, when the grave Terence writ,
And Expectation cram'd the wide stretch'd Pit.
A sudden Rumour thro' his Audience run,
That the New Rept-Dancer had just begun ;
In Crouds the skittish Audience brush'd away,
And for the Tumbler's Tricks forsook the Play.
Curse on Old Rome ! that not content t' enslave
Our Bodies, must our British Taste deprave :
In vain Old Shakespear's Virtue treads the Stage,
On empty Benches doom'd to spend his Rage ;
When we would entertain, we're forc'd to Ship ye
Tumblers from France, mock Kings from Mississippi !
To Night, strange Means we try your Smiles to win,
And bring a good Old Mistress on the Scene :
Kindly she quits a calm Retreat, to shew
What Acting pleas'd you Fifty Years ago.
Like Old Entellus, long refus'd to Fight,
Fresh in her Spirit she summons all her Might,
Season'd by Time, and harden'd to the Stroke,
She dares the youngest of us all provoke :
Blooming a Century, like a Forest Oak,
Unconscious, in her Limbs, what Havock Time
Can make, or how deform us from our Prime.
When you behold her quiv'ring on the Stage,
Remember, 'tis a personated Age :
Nor think, that no Remains of Youth she feels,
She'll shew you, e're she's done,--she has it in her Heels.

Drama-

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

B ^{Ellayr} <i>Fluellin</i> } Officers. <i>Mac Morris</i>	{ <i>Mr. Ryan.</i> <i>Mr. Griffin.</i> <i>Mr. H. Bullock.</i> <i>Mr. Spiller.</i> <i>Mr. C. Bullock.</i> <i>Mr. Harper.</i> <i>Mr. Eggleton.</i> <i>Mr. Bobems.</i>
<i>Culverin</i> , a Sharper,	
<i>Meagre</i> , a Scrivener,	
<i>Loadham</i> , a <i>Hamburg</i> Merchant,	
<i>Sharp</i> , <i>Bellayr's</i> Servant,	
<i>Jaspar</i> , <i>Meagre's</i> Servant,	

W O M E N.

<i>Widow Rich</i> ,	<i>Mrs. Vandervelt.</i>
<i>Benedict</i> } Her two Grand- <i>Charlotte</i> } Daughters,	{ <i>Mrs. Bullock.</i> <i>Miss Stone.</i>
<i>Jane</i> , the <i>Widow's</i> Servant,	<i>Mrs. Robertson.</i>

S C E N E *Covent-Garden,*



THE
Half-Pay OFFICERS.



ACT I.

SCENE I. *Covent-Garden.*

Enter Bellayr, and Sharp.

BELLAYR.



HARP, what were you bred to ?

Sha. Bred to, Sir ! why that's a hard Question — bred to ! Let me think --- to nothing in particular, and yet I was bred to a great many

2 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

many things to — The old People us'd to say, when I was a Boy, that I was bred to the Gallows. — You must know, Sir, I had my Education in a Neighbouring Academy, *Covent-Garden*; and being something bold and enterprizing in my Youth, a Fortune-teller told me, I should be either a great Man, or be hang'd.

Bel. Very near Relatives, truly. — But do you think you could make a good Pimp?

Sha. My Modesty won't suffer me to commend my self; but, without Vanity, I could. — But pray, Sir, your Reason?

Bel. You know, Sirrah, that Captain's Pay does not suit my aspiring Genius: I would fain be advanc'd, be made a great Officer, that I may live at ease, and receive my Money for nothing.

Sha. Sir, you are in the Right. And pray, Sir, is my Pimping absolutely necessary towards your Advancement?

Bel. I think so.

Sha. I fear, Sir, I am not qualified; for if I were a very good Pimp, I might be a great Officer my self before now.

Bel.

The Half-Pay. OFFICERS. 3

Bel. You must try. There is Old Lady Rich. has two Grand-Daughters; now I'm for the fairest of the Two; she hath prodigious Charms in the South-Sea Stock, and is vastly agreeable in Houses, Lands, and Tenements.

Sha. O, Sir, your Business is done then; I'm very intimate there.

Bel. Prithee, with whom?

Sha. Sir, I am acquainted with a Shoe-cleaner, that knows one of the Old Lady's Servants.

Bel. Pox o' your Black-guard Project, I'm in a fairer way than that myself; I have seen the young Lady often; og'd her, handled, talk'd of Love, sworn, and l'y'd to her.

Sha. Then you're in a very hopeful Way, I must own.

Bel. But who do I see? By *Venus*, a Chamber-Maid of that Family, I must make her my Friend.

Enter Jane.

Hark ye, Child, let me contemplate your Countenance: Thou hast an Oval Face, with two pretty Dimples: Now according to the Rules of Physiognomy

4 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

you must be good-natur'd ; therefore I'll tell you at once my Condition, which you, and only you can redress. Know then that I am young, and a Lover ; and it is your pretty young Lady *Benedict* that has charm'd me ; and if you don't lend a helping Hand, you'll have my Death to answer for, for I resolve to hang my self.

Jane. Prithee, Friend, don't be troublesome ; I wonder at the Impertinence of some Folks ! -- I don't understand you.

Bel. No ! Prithee hold your Hand, Child, — do you understand me now ?

Jane. No, truly, not I ; I don't know what you'd be at.

Bel. Hold your Hand again : Do you begin to comprehend me yet ?

Jane. Yes, now I do take you. Dear Captain *Bellaÿr*, I ask a thousand Pardons, I protest I did not know you ; You have such an odd Way with you. You may depend upon it, I'll do You all the Service I can. -- Well, I know 'tis Lady *Benedict* that you sigh for ; I have heard and observ'd things -- but I can tell you, that it is next to impossible,

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 5

possible, to succeed there : But you are a Soldier, and are us'd to encounter Difficulties.

Bel. But prithee, why impossible ?

Jane. Because she seems to despise your whole Sex -- and hates Marriage more than a Galley-Slave does the Oar.

Bel. There we agree -- so do I. — Prithee do you tell her so. -- But tell me, have I a Rival ?

Jane. Yes.

Bel. So much the better; the Victory will be the greater.

Jane. I can assure you, that Rival has done you a Prejudice; for I believe 'tis he that has put her out of Conceit with the whole Sex.

Bel. What is he ?

Jane. You must know that Lady *Rich*, who is as old as Time it self, fancies her self growing young again, and therefore has a Mind to taste the Comforts of Matrimony, in her three hundred and fiftieth Year ; therefore like a good Housewife, she hath a Mind to provide for her self first : But in the mean time she hath recommended two Lovers to her two Grand-Daughters ; Lady *Benedict*, and Miss *Charlotte* -- these two

6 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

are rich Citizens ; but the oddest Figures, they are the very Representatives of *Pharoah's Dream* ; one is as fat as Plenty, the other as lean as Famine. In short, they are in every thing Contradictions.

Bel. I have it now ; I mean a Thought to come at the little *Benedict*. In short, the old Woman must be provided for with a Lover ; but how to find out a Man desperate enough for that Service, will be the Difficulty.

Jane. That Difficulty's remov'd already ; for know, there is a Man brave enough to venture upon that old crazy Tenement, tho' it should fall and crush him. O, he's a perfect Hero for Courage ; perhaps you may know him ; one Captain *Culverin*.

Bel. Captain *Culverin* ! There is a Fellow so call'd about Town ; but hang him, he's no more a Captain, than I am an Alderman : He blusters like the *North Wind*, when he meets with a Man tame enough to bear it ; but is as gentle as a Summer's Breeze, when he lights on a Man that will Fight. He knows nothing of War, but the Names of Sieges and Battles ; he lives upon shew-

ing his Sword, borrowing half Crowns from peaceable young Fellows, and bilking Taverns. In short, he kicks one half of the World, while the other half kicks him.

Jane. I thought he was some pitiful foolish Rogue : For would you believe it, Sir, he never took the least Notice of me, as if any of our Family was to be dispos'd of, without my Assistance.

Bel. Foolish, indeed !

Jane. This impudent *Culverin* must not carry off the old Woman ; for consider, Captain, a great Part of your Wife's Fortune is to come from the old Lady.

Bel. My Wife ! What then, may I be sure she's mine ?

Jane. Have not I given her to you just now ? -- What would you have more ?

Bel. True, you have ; I thank you : But is there no Danger from this Rival ?

Jane. Rival ! Nay you may say Rivals -- for they're both for Lady *Benedict* ; the Reason is, she being Eldest, has a thousand Pounds more to her Fortune

8 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

tune than her Sister *Charlotte* ; and the two Stock-Jobbing Rogues will certainly quarrel, not for the Lady, but for this odd Thousand.

Bel. O that is a lucky Thousand. Prithee do you take care to sow Dissention betwixt 'em. -- But pray tell me, has Miss *Charlotte* no other Lover?

Jane. Yes, Sir, an *Irish* Officer, he is call'd Captain *Mac Morris*, a handsome Gentleman, and generous too ; but so fond of his Country, that he won't speak to be understood. He is always attended by another Officer, one Captain *Fluellin*, a *Welchman*.

Bel. I know them both, and have serv'd abroad with them ; they are honest brave Fellows ; and tho' they can't make fine Speeches, they can break Heads : They are gallant before an Enemy, and so generous, they'll injure nothing, except good *English*. -- Let me see, I have a Thought come into my Head -- suppose we should put one of these Gentlemen upon the Old Widow ; I'm sure they'll do any thing to serve me.

Jane. I say, put no Body upon her yet. If you can but get her Consent to

Marry fair *Benedict*, leave me to dispose of the old One.

Bel. I will not invade your Prerogative; we'll divide honourably; the old Woman shall be your Perquisite, the young One mine.

Jane. Agreed, and then we'll see who'll be first tir'd of their Bargain. Dear Captain, good bw'y t'ye, I must run home-- come soon, and I'll prepare your Reception: We'll give the old Woman a little *Diacodium* in her Tea, to set her to sleep, and then the House is our own.

Bel. Will you remember me?

Jane. Indeed, indeed, I will.

Bel. I must give you a *Memorandum*; and when you look on this, think on me.

[*Gives a Ring.*]

Jane. How can I forget so sweet a Gentleman?

[*Exit.*]

Bel. Thus I bribe the Governor to betray the Garrison. This Money is the Thing that sends us all to the Devil.

Sba. Then 'tis to be hop'd, that such poor Rascals as I, may be sav'd. But who have we here?

TO *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Bel. O, my two Brother Officers, *Fluellin* and *Mac Morris*; they seem very earnest, but 'tis upon the old Subjects of Discipline, Battles, and Sieges: And tho' the Peace should last fifty Years, they'll talk of nothing but War.

Enter Mac Morris, and Fluellin.

Flu. Look you, Captain *Mac Morris*, I pefeech you now, will you vouchsafe me, look you, a few Disputations with you, as partly touching and concerning the Disciplines of the Wars, and the *Roman Wars*, in the way of Arguments, look you, and friendly Communications; partly to satisfy my Opinion, and partly for the Satisfaction, look you, of my Mind, as touching the Directions of the Military Disciplines, look you, that is the Point.

Mac. By Crift, my Honey Dear, it is a great Shame to be talking, and talking, when there is no Wars, nor no Disciplines, nor no Pates to be broken. There ish the *Irish*, and the *French*, the *Turks* ish all at Peace upon one another; and by my Shoul it is a great Shame to be

be prating, and to be after doing of nothing.

Flu. Look you, Captain *Mac Morris*, under your Corrections, and Discretions, and Favours, do you see, it is only for the Information of Disciplines, concerning the prestin Wars of the *Romans*, and the Wars of Prince *Eugene*, look you, that is the Humour of it.

Mac. Upon my Shoul now, Honey Dear Captain *Fluellin*, Prince *Eugene* is as brave a Man as any in the whole World, or in *Ireland* it self. But by Crist, my Dear, 'tis braver to talk fewer, and to knock some Body down: — Can you be after remembring now, Honey Dear, how brave, and how big, and how mighty the Enemy did speak at the Breach of *Lisle*? Upon my Shoul, they did speak as brave Words as you should see upon a Summer's Day; and upon my Shoul they were after running away, like a Parcel of Sheep.

Flu. The Enemy was an Ass, and a prating Coxcomb; but we will not be so. O, here is young Captain *Bellayr*, who is a marvellous fallourous young Gentleman, that is certain; and of great Expeditions and Knowledge in the Wars.

Wars. By **Cheshu**, he will maintain his Arguments, as well as any Military Man in the whole World, concerning the Disciplines of the Wars.

Mac. Captain *Bellayr*, how does your sweet Face? As **Crist** shall save me, I am as glad to see you, as no Man in the whole World.

Bel. Thank you, Friends. Well, Fellow Soldiers, how does Peace agree with you?

Mac. Upon my Shoul it is worse than the Plague, or the Pox it self. There ish the Dukes, and the Lords, and the Kings, I think ish all mad: They prate, and they prate with their Ambassadors, and won't Fight like Gentlemen. You may see, Honey Dear, by the great Noises and Busnesses in the World, that there is nothing at all to be done.

Flu. Look you, Captain *Bellayr*, I would make Consultations with you, touching the Disciplines of the Foots and the Horses, by way of Conversations, do you see, that is the Humour of it.

Bel. Well, my Friends, since Wars are no more, I'll turn my Arms another way: I have a Weapon for every
Enemy:

Enemy: I love to encounter a Foe that wears her Head-piece ruff'd, one with a *Flanders* Lac'd Helmet; a smooth Fair-fac'd Enemy.

Flu. But Captain *Bellayr*, as concerning Comparisons betwixt *Harry* of *Monmouth*, look you, and *Alexander* the Pig.

Bel. I suppose you mean *Alexander* the Great, Captain.

Flu. Why, I pray you, now, is not Pig great, and great Pig. -- The Pig, the Great, the Huge, the Mighty, the Magnanimous, are all one Reck'nings, save the Phrase is a little Variations, that is all.

Bel. Very true, Captain.

Flu. But what call you the Place where *Alexander* the Pig was born?

Bel. *Alexander*, the Son of *Philip*, was born in *Macedon*.

Flu. I think it is *Macedon*: And if you look in the Maps of *Wales* and *Macedon*, you will find that the Scituations, look you, is both alike. There is a River in *Macedon*, and ther is also and moreover a River in *Wales*, call'd *Wye*; there is a high Mountain in *Macedon*, and there is another in *Wales*. It

14 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

is out of my Prains, what is call'd the Hill in *Macedon*; but that in *Wales* is call'd *Pen*: Look you, there are good Men born in *Monmouth*.

Mac. Upon my Shoul ther ish, and in *Ireland* too.

Bel. I would have you dispute these Points of Discipline with *Culverin*, who sets up for a great Soldier.

Flu. By Cheshu, he is an Ass as in the World, and hur will verify as much in his Beard: He has no mote Directions in the true Disciplines of the Wars, look you, of the *Roman* Disciplines, than is a Puppy Dog.

Bel. Come, Gentlemen, you both understand the Discipline of the Wars; but who is learn'd in the Discipline of Love? Who can Mine and Counter-mine, and dress Ambuscades for Women? *Mars* sleeps, and *Capit* now is General: We are Soldiers, and must not be idle, lest our Persons, like our Arms, should grow rusty. In short, I have a Desigh to provide for us all.

Mac. Upon my Shoul, do so, Honey Dear.

Bel. But say, Gentlemen, have you a Mind to list under *Hymen* upon good Terms?

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 15

Terms? In plain *English*, wou'd you marry?

Mac. Upon my Shoul it is kind, Father, for me to marry, and kind Mother too. All my Relations and Cousins Germans did marry upon one another.

Fln. As touching the Directions of Marriage, look you, I will not disgrace the Ploods and the Honours, and the Families of the *Bluellins*, look you, that is the Humour of it.

Bel. She that I would recommend you, is old enough to be *Adams* Grand-Mother: She is her self the first of a very ancient Family.

Fln. Look you, Captain, if her Ploods and her Nobilities be great and high, I will marry her.

Bel. Her Blood is ancient enough, I can assure you; if she has any in her Body. — But we'll take a Bottle, and consult about it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II. *The Widow's House.**Enter Jasper and Jane.*

Jas. **P**RAY forsooth, Mistress, is my Master here?

Jane. Pray, forsooth, who is your Master?

Jas. O laud, I thought every Body had known my Master, by me, and me by my Master, we're so like one another: Why, 'tis Mr. Meagre the Scrivener.

Jane. Mr. Meagre! -- Prithee did'st thou ever eat in thy Life?

Jas. Yes, once; but 'tis so long ago, that I have forgot it.

Jane. Then thou got'st a Surfeit, I suppose, and could'st never endure Meat since.

Jas. Pray, forsooth, Mistress, is your House troubl'd with Vermin?

Jane. Yes, why?

Jas. Because you shall see me catch a Mouse in a Minute, and eat it. The Truth is, I do rob the Cat of a hollow Birnōw and then, and that makes me look so fat.

Jane.
Digitized by Google

Jane. How does your Master diet himself.

Jas. Forsooth, he does not diet himself, he starves himself: There is nothing in our House to eat but Gold; but I had rather have Beef and Mutton, if there are any such things in the World. But to Day he had a Feast, for he had the Rump of a Lark for Dinner, that the Cat kill'd, by the Cage's being left open. But pray, forsooth, when is this Wedding to be that's talk'd of! They say my Master's to be married to one of your Ladies; she'll be finely shap'd after she has liv'd with us a while. Oh, here he comes.

Enter Meagre, and another Man.

Man. You know, Mr. Meagre, you and I have been old Acquaintance, and this Friend of mine, that I was telling you of, wants a hundred Pounds upon a sudden Emergency.

Meag. So he brings me good Security; some three, four, or five able and substantial Citizens, for Mortality's sake, I will lend him a hundred Pounds.

Man. He is a substantial Man, won't you take his Word?

Meag. A Word is enough to the Wife. I will take any Man's Word to owe me a hundred Pound; but I will not lend five, even to a Lord, upon his Word.

Man. What must be done?

Meag. If he finds good Security, he shall pay but twenty Pounds *Premium*, with lawful Interest, and no more than two Guineas for drawing the Bond, because he is your Friend.

Man. This is extravagant, downright Extortion.

Meag. How do you mean Extortion? 'Tis very well known, that I have taken fifty and sixty *per Cent.* from my own Relations, my own Flesh and Blood, as I may say; that is, when they were in Necessity.

Jane. Own Flesh and Blood! Own Skin and Bones, he means. [*Aside.*]

Man. But why two Guineas for drawing the Bond? You do that yourself, Mr. Meagre.

Meag. I do so; and I take but two Guineas, that is but a Guinea more than

than an Attorney would have; because he is your Friend.

Mark. I'd sooner give fifty per Cent. to a common Pawn-broker, with Plate Security, than deal with such a Jew.

[Exit.

Meag. Go to, my Money is my own, and I will take care of it -- Mrs. Jane your Servant -- How now, Jasper, hast thou din'd?

Jas. Yes, Sir, I had some delicate Sharp Air for Dinner.

Meag. And yet thou look'st as if thou had'st not eat a Bit this Month.

Jas. Mrs. Jane, forsooth, did you ever see two such Earwigs as my Master and I? Don't we both look like a Couple of Sprats out of Season.

Jane. Truly, I think the Picture of either of you, in a Ring, would do as well as a Death's Head, to put one in Mind of one's End. — But pray, Sir, with what Face can you pretend to marry such a fine young Lady as *Benedict*?

Meag. The Reason why we are so lean and consumed, is nothing but eating too much. — I have brought my self so low, with high Feeding, I must

20 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

be more temperate, indeed I must, or else the Doctor tells me I shall die.

Jas. O Laud, high Feeding! I wish I could see a Cobweb, I would eat two or three Spiders, to shew my high Feeding.

Jane. To go to Bed with you, will be like lying with an Anatomy.

Meag. Well, Mrs. *Jane*, for the sake of Mrs. *Benedict*, I will be more temperate, indeed I will — I won't Gormondize in this unnatural Manner.

Jas. Well, I must provide my Belly another Master.

Meag. But go to Mrs. *Jane*, you know my Business; the Old Lady *Rich* has given her Consent to my Marrying Madam *Benedict*.

Jane. Ay, that is, Sir, if you can win her. But if she should happen to like Mr. *Loadham* better, then you are to have Miss *Charlotte*.

Meag. No, Mrs. *Jane*, Miss *Charlotte* is too light for me, by a thousand Pounds, and I know the Value of a thousand Pound — but pray who is this same Mr. *Loadham*?

Jane. A Man of Substance, in the City, a *Hamburg* Merchant: My Old Lady is resolv'd to dispose of her two Grand-

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 21

Grand-Daughters, to you two rich Citizens; but Madam *Benedict*, being Eldest, and having a thousand Pounds more, is to chuse which of you she likes best, and the other is to marry Miss *Charlotte*.

Meag. Then he that has the most Substance will carry her.

Fane. Then what will become of you that are but a Shadow?

Meag. Go to Mrs. *Fane*, I mean in Money, Goods and Chattels.

Fane. O, here comes your Rival, Mr. *Loadham*.

Enter Loadham.

Lo. Well, Mrs. *Fane*, and what News? Does pretty Mrs. *Benedict* begin to smile yet? Does she think well of my Parts, or no? Do you think my Person won't fill her Eye, and her Heart, and all that? Is she a Woman of Judgment, and does she like me or no?

Fane. She is a Woman of Judgment, and she herself will tell you, whether she likes you or no.

Meag. Sir, I understand you are a Citizen of *London*, therefore I would desire to be known to you.

Lo.

22 *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Lo. Sir, I have no great Stomach to your Acquaintance, you are something too lean.

Meag. And you a Bit too-fat.

Lo. Your lean Jaws, and spindle Shanks afright me.

Meag. And thy Paunch disgusts me—I don't like this greasy Fellow.

Jane. O, here comes Madam Benedick.

Enter Benedick.

Ben. Bless my Eyes! What do I see; my two Lovers? O *Cupid*, if thou dost enroll such things as these into thy Service, who would be thy Slave? Sure that Woman must be violently fond of the whole Sex, that could take up with one of these. Your Servant Mr. *Load-ham*, I think you fall away.

Lo. I do waste, that's certain, Madam. This Love's the Devil; 'tis as bad to me as keeping *Lent*; the Gracefulness of my Person decays; methinks I look as if I had not eat a Bit this Month.

Meag. I'm so small she can't see me.

Ben. Upon my Word, Sir, you must waste a little more, before I can like you.

you, your ~~Sue~~ is not to my Count; Consider, Marriage is a Lease for Life, and I don't think it safe to let a Tenement to such a heavy Incumbent.

Meag. I find I shall be the Man. Fair Mrs. *Benedict*, I come to talk with you about a Business, which is a private Business, concerning a Business relating to your Happiness and mine. But pray will you lend me your Ear?

Ben. I cannot spare an Ear for the World, no, nor a Bit of Ear: Speak out, I'm sure your Business is no Secret; if it were, you'd have more Discretion, than to tell it to a Woman.

Meag. Then be it known by these Presents, that I *Aminadab Meagre*, Citizen of *London*, and House-Keeper in the Parish of *Cripplegate*, do owe to Mrs. *Benedict*, Lady of my Thoughts, of *London*, Gentlewoman, my true and lawful Heart of *England*, to be paid to the said Mrs. *Benedict*, her Executors, Administrators and Assigns.

Lo. To her Executors, young Extortion! What, will you pay your Heart when she's dead?

Meag. Go too, I say; don't interrupt me. — If she should die, I can't help

24 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

help it:— I say to be paid to the said Mrs. *Benedict*, upon Demand; at the Church Door — which Payment to be faithfully and truly perform'd, I do hereby bind my Body and Soul.

Ben. How, Sir, your Soul?

Meag. Yes, Mistress, Body and Soul — My Body I'll take care of; and as for my Soul, when I am dead, let that shift for it self. (*Aside.*) In witness whereof, I have herunto set my Hand and Seal, the last Day of the merry Month of *May*, in the first Year of the Reign of King *Cupid*.

Lo. Why young Fanaticism, with your two hundred *per Cent.* at your Back; do you think this will do? What, make Love in the Stile of a Bond and Judgment!

Meag. Go too, I say, don't interrupt me. — Sign'd, seal'd, and deliver'd in the Presence of —

Ben. No, no, Sir, not so fast — I find you are for turning me into an Indenture; so I leave you together to agree among your selves, which of you is to Sign and Seal me. — Now I hope they'll quarrel. [*Exit.*]

Lo. Thou

Lo. Thou Skeleton, thou hast frightened the Lady away.

Meag. Go to, thou art uncivil; I think the Case will bear an Action; thou hast affronted me before my Mistress.

Lo. Mistress to thee! Thou Spider-Catcher, thou Picture of Famine; do you think she wants a Weazel to drive away Vermin?

Meag. My Teeth water to strike him—I have a good Stomach. —

Lo. I believe thou hast, to eat me—thou starv'd Rascallion.

Meag. Hold me, *Jasper*, or I shall fly at him.

Lo. Let him come on, I will baste thee most immoderately.

Meag. That thou mayst, for thou hast Grease enough to baste fifty. — Hold me, *Jasper*, hold me.

Lo. Get thee out, get thee out, I say.
[*Kicks him out.*]

Meag. Tis very well; an Assault, an Assault; I will have an Action of Battery.
[*Exit.*]

D

Enter

Enter Culverin.

Cal. What's this! A Quarrel, and I not in it; I must call them to an Account about it. — Hark ye, Sir, who's that goes there?

Lo. 'Tis that puritanical Rogue, *Messgre* the Scrivener, and he has been making Love to my Mistress before my Face.

Cul. Wounds, Sir, then you must fight him.

Lo. That I dare, Sir, for he's a cowardly Rogue, and I am a Man of Honour. Why I'm a Captain as well as you; I belong to the right honourable the Artillery Company; and did you but see how valliantly I march in Buff upon a Show Day, 'twould make your Hair stand an End.

Cul. But hark ye, my dear Buff, do you know how much you are oblig'd to me?

Lo. Oblig'd to you! Pray in what, Captain *Culverin*?

Cul. Don't you know that I am going to marry the old Widow *Rich*?

Lo.

Lo. I have heard so.

Cul. Why then your Bus'ness is done; for by that Match I become Guardian to the two young Ladies, who you know will be then my Grand-Daughter's.

Lo. Very well, dear Captain, I long to hear the rest.

Cul. Then I have resolv'd to give you Lady *Benedict*, because I have a Kindness for you.

Lo. I knew you were good natur'd at Bottom; and I always lov'd you, tho' I was afraid to be too free with you, because you were a little rough or so — but I'm transported, ravish'd — let me embrace you, dear Captain, what shall I do for you?

Cul. Do for me! Wounds, lend me half a Crown.

Lo. Half a Crown! Now am I afraid to refuse him, for fear of being beat — I'll try, but I don't know whether. —

Cul. How, Sir!

Lo. Nothing, Captain, but here's half a Crown, and you're very welcome withal my Heart.

Dea

Cut. Very

28. *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Cul. Very well. — but now I think on't, take this half Crown again.

Lo. Ay, Sir, with all my Heart.

Cul. And d'you see, change it for a Guinea; for I am to dine with some young Rakes of Quality, and my Club will come to a Piece.

Lo. A Guinea, Captain! I have not a Guinea to spare.

Cul. Wounds, Sir, make a Guinea then. I take this for a Refusal, and shall the Man live that refuses to lend me a Guinea! Have I fought so many Battles up to the Knees in Blood, and live to be refus'd a Guinea!

Lo. Good Captain, don't be in such a Passion, stay 'till I come, and I'll go home and fetch you a Guinea.

Cul. You Lye, you won't fetch me a Guinea, nor you shan't fetch me a Guinea; then get you out, you Guts and Garbage, or I will use Military Discipline upon thee. (*Kicks him out.*) What a damn'd Fool was I to part with the half Crown, before I had the Guinea; I don't use to be so impolitick. — I have not a Rag of Money to carry on my Amour. — But I'll be reveng'd on this fat Rascal, and

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 29
and then must I turn my Arms some
where, to raise Contributions.

*By Politicks or Force I'll make my Way,
And sharp 'till Fortune sends a better Day.*
[Exit.]

A C T II.

S C E N E III. *The Street.*

Enter Culverin and Meagre.

Meag. CAPTAIN *Culverin*, your
Servant. Did you hear how
Paunch affronted me?

Cul. I did, and am come to do you
Justice.

Meag. How, Captain?

Cul. How? Why you shall fight
him.

Meag. I fight, Captain! Fighting is
out of my Way.

Cut. Wounds, I say you shall send
him a Challenge, and fight him.

30. *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Meag. I could fight him with Actions of Battery, and buffet him with Demurrers, Evidence, &c.

Cul. I'm your Friend, and will stand by you. I say you shall send him a Challenge, and I'll put on your Cloaths, and meet him in your stead.

Meag. Wilt thou so, Captain?—Why then I don't fear him.

Cul. I'm your Friend, I tell you.—Wounds, look at this Sword.

Meag. It is a fine Sword truly; but pray, Captain, put it up: I never saw a Man so stout.

Cul. Stout! Wounds, Sir, I'd fight the Devil, and give him two Flashes of Lightning Odds. — But hark ye, now I think on't, this Blade is not broad enough for his fat Guts; so, Sir, you must lend me a Piece to buy a new One.

Meag. A Piece, Captain!

Cul. Yes, Sir, a Guinea.

Meag. Upon what Security, Captain?

Cul. Security, Sir! Wounds, my Honour.

Meag. Ay,

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 31

Meag. Ay, Sir, but I'm us'd to take in Pawns, and I don't know where to stick a Ticket upon Honour.

Cul. Death and Thunder, Sir, look at this Sword, and then tell me if you can refuse me.

Meag. No, Captain, I don't absolutely refuse you, that I dare not say, but only that. —

Cul. Only what, Sir?

Meag. Nothing, Captain, but here is a Guinea.

Cul. Now, Sir, know that Captain Culverin is a Man of Honour.

Meag. He does borrow Money like a Man of Honour, that's the Truth on't. [*Aside.*

Cul. Come — alongs — You shall send the Challenge this Minute, and then Slaughter's the Word. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

32 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

SCENE IV. *The Widow's House.*

Enter Benedict and Jane.

Jane. **B**UT what do you think
Madam, of handfom
Captain *Bellayr*?

Ben. I despise all Mankind; one Fel-
low is a wit, another a Fool, I hate
both: This is a Fop, tother's a sloven,
this is Perfum'd and that chews To-
bacco; so that Morning and Evening
I'm upon my Knees to pray for no Hus-
band.

Jane. But the Captain seems to be
none of these you have nam'd.

Ben. What then, he's either too fond,
too indifferent, too fickle, too incon-
stant, or something or other: He has
Faults I'm sure, tho' I can't for the
Soul of me find them out.

Jane. Then he's handsome.

Ben. Why he's well enough, and—
but what care I, I despise all Fellows.

Jane. Here's little *Miss Charlotte*, as
young as she is, of another Opinion.

Ben. Oh, she's a Child.

Jane. But she does not think so; she's
as fond of being call'd Woman, as a
Woman is of being call'd Girl.

Enter Miss Charlotte.

Cha. O Sister, I see you're drest to go abroad, but you shan't think to leave me at home, with my Old Grandmother, while you go abroad to get Sweet-Hearts ; indeed I'll go abroad, and get Sweet-Hearts as well as you, so I will.

Ber. Indeed, my dear, you must be kept at Home, for you are a little too forward.

Cha. What, because you are eldest, you think to keep me under, but indeed you shan't, Madam ; what tho' you are a little bigger, I hope I'm big enough to be married as well as you.

Ber. Are you indeed ? and Pray, Madam, how do you know that ?

Cha. How do I know ? What, d'you think I don't know when a Body's fit for a Husband, I love you for that, you see I have left off playing with Girls a great while ago— Oh, I love to look at fine Gentlemen ; and then when I leave 'em, I am so sorry, and long to see them again—I'm resolv'd I'll have a Captain, they're so tall and so fine ! O I love a great Husband !

Jane.

34 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Jane, I find Miss will soon provide for her self. But here comes Captain *Bellayr*.

Enter Bellayr.

Ben. Methinks from our last Conversation, he had no Encouragement to renew his Visit so soon: But why flutters this my Heart at his approach? Bless me, I hope I don't love the Fellow.

Bel. Madam, I kiss your fair Hands; pretty Miss, I'm yours.

Cha. I thank you, and I am your humble Servant with all my Heart.

Ben. Well, Captain, I see tho' you mind nobody, nor nobody minds you, yet you will plague People with your Visits, if it be only to shew that you are well dressed.

Bel. You know Madam, 'tis Peace now, and want of Action would make me dull. I did not support my Spirits with French Wine and good Cloaths.

Ben. Then you only dress to please your self.

Bel. We do all things to please our selves, tho' we would persuade the World

World 'tis to please them—but I can't Flatter.

Ben. Nothing but your self which is the most fulsome sort of Flattery—Your Mind is like your Pocket-Glass, which reflects nothing but your own Face in a very deceitful light: Yet with all this, I know you are come to plague me with Love, as you did when I saw you last, if I had not interrupted you.

Bel. Ha, ha, your Ladyship's good Opinion suggests that to you: And pray, Madam what do you think on't, how do you like me?

Ben. As I do all things that are indifferent to me: You are well drest and vain; not handsome enough for a Youth, nor Masculine enough for a Man; you are, in short, such a thing as one cannot Love, and yet too insipid to be hated.

Bel. O, I like this, I think I have her now, but I'll attack her her own way. (*aside*) Oh, this indifference charms me, 'tis my own Humour exactly. Now I'll tell you what I think of you.

Ben. Pr'hee do.

Bel.

Bel. Why you are neither too fair nor too brown, too tall nor too short; your Shape's taper, your Eyes bright; and were you any thing but what you are, you must be disagreeable; and being just what you are, I must tell you, I don't care a Farthing for you.

Ben. Excellently acted! But does this Indifference extend to the whole Sex.

Bel. All, all: That Woman help'd to get me, I don't thank her, because 'twas for her own Diversion; that she brought me up, I don't thank her neither, for that was for her own Diversion too, she wanted something to play with. I have Manners enough not to mistrust any Woman, and resolve to trust none.

Jane. Bless me! How heartily these two do Lye?

Ben. Then plague me no more with your hideous Love; I won't bear it, tho' it be but in Jest.

Cha. I wonder you a'n't ashamed, Sister, to use such a fine Gentleman so scornfully! Where's your Manners? Now I'll tell him all. — Indeed, Sir, she

she tells a great Fib, for she Loves you very well, and talk'd of you in her sleep last Night, so she did, and sigh'd and flung her Arms about, like any thing.

Ben. O you wicked little lying thing; you shall never lie with me again.

Bel. Miss is not grown up to her Dissimulation yet, therefore I believe her—And, I fancy, Madam, if You and I could but prevail upon our selves to speak Truth, we should come to a right understanding.

Ben. I do believe we are both damn'd Lyars; yet I will not confess first.

Bel. Then I will. Know that every Word I spoke of indifference to you is false, that I love you more than I do Honour or Preferment, the dearest thing to a Soldier.

Ben. Then take my Hand, and with it my Heart; in spite of Duty, Interest, or any sordid View,—Now get the Old Lady's Consent, and we are happy.

Bel. Now is not this better than whining and dying for half a Year, to no purpose. But how shall I thank my little Angel, for this piece of Service.

[to Charl.

Cha. Indeed you must get me a Husband, or else give me a Ticket to go to the Masquerade.

Bel. I'll do both my Dear.

Jane. Here's my Old Lady's Lover coming.

Enter Culverin.

Cul. Ladies your humble Servant,—Captain *Bellayr* yours,—ha, Mrs. *Jane*, a Word with you, — Do you speak great Things of me to the Widow, in private ;—Have you told her that I once got a Witch with Child, at a hundred and ten, of Twins ; and that in the late War I fill'd up the muster-Roll of my Regiment with my own Bastards.

Jane. If that be the Case I'll leave the Service, for I shan't endure a Place where there's like to be so many Children.

Cul. I must come down the ready, here, or there's nothing to be done. The Jades Palm must be tickled, and I have but one half Guinea left, hark ye my Dear, let me see your right Hand ; Is there any feeling in it—[*gives Money.* Touch and take by *Mars.*

Jane.

Jane. Well Sir I'll take a great deal of Care of her when she lies in.

Cul. And be sure you nurse her up very well, for this Day or two; for fear she should dye before I marry her.

Jane. I will Sir.

Cul. Well, I'll go in and pay my Respects to her. [Exit.]

Bel. Is this Fellow to be your Grandfather?

Ben. Indeed I fear so : For our old Ancestor is resolv'd that we shall live single till she is Married, for she does not care to make any Addition to our Fortunes, before she knows whether she shall have any more Children.

Bel. Nay, if she must have a Husband, I fancy 'twould be more for our Interest that some honest Gentleman should be the Man.

Jane. O, here they come.

Enter Culverin and Widow Rich.

Cul. sings.] Come my old Dove —
With me joy, with me Joy, Captain
Bellayr; here's a Girl for you now; my
Dear walk about — there's a Shape, there
is an Air for you, once more my Dear;

see there—are not we a pretty young Couple? Oons what a sweet Generation we shall beget.

Wid. Jenny, a Chair, a Chair Jenny, I can hold out no longer. 'Tis more than fifty eight Years, since I have us'd my Hams so much.

Cut. Come my little Widow I'll stick close by you.

Wid. You need not Sir, for I can't Fly.

Cut. Fly! Wounds but you can tho'. I'll have the Windows shut, for I am sure she's a Witch.

Wid. What does he talk of Jenny, a Witch?

Cut. A Witch! no, no, I say I Wish that we may all fly upward to Heaven.

Wid. 'Tis well said Captain. For thither we must all go; Rich and Poor, Old and Young, there's no remedy.

Cut. Ay, ay, the sooner you go the better, after we're marry'd, [*Aside.*

Wid. What, does he talk of Marriage, Jenny.

Fane. Yes, he says, if you please, Madam,

Wid

41 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Wid. Alas, my Vow of Widowhood is not yet expir'd — If you come about some ten Years hence, I will talk with him about it.

Cul. Ten Years hence ! About that Time she'll be a Wife fit for an Antiquary, who may shew her Body for a Mummy, and strip off her Parchment Skin, to write Records upon.

Jane. But it won't be large enough to hold her Annals, she has liv'd so long.

Cul. Come, brush up, my old Buff, prepare your self, and let's be married to Night. There needs but short Warning to do a good Thing.

Bel. If thou should'st marry her to Night, thou'lt be her Executor to Morrow Morning.

Cul. That's as much I desire, Captain ; any thing that's reasonable will satisfy me. [*Widow coughs.*] Ouns, this Cough is worse than an Earthquake ; one Shake more, and she falls to Pieces like a House of Cards. I wish the Wedding was over. — What say you, my Dear, are you ready ?

42 *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Wid. You are a goodly Person, Captain, I must needs say, a goodly Person ; but only for this Vow of Widowhood ; What will the World say that I should marry so soon ?

Cut. Damn the World, and hang Widowhood, my little *Judy* Flower ; are we not commanded to marry and live chaste ?

Wid. Truly, and so we are, Captain ; but the World is grown so wicked, it reflects on Marriage ; tho', Heaven knows, if I marry, 'tis with a Design to live chaste.

Cut. Ha, my little Buxom Rogue ! By Gad, I must kiss you. Pray, Captain *Bellair*, salute my Bride.

Wid. Much good may't do you, Sir ; these Comforts come but seldom, after Fourscore ; the World is grown so wicked, that we never think of comforting one another.

Cut. Does n't she kiss like Twenty ? — Come, once more, my old Case of Vellum.

Wid. Ah, Blessing on your Heart, now, you are a merry Wag. — But we should go good freely, without egging on ; indeed we should.

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 43

Cut. Come, rise and stir your Stumps, Widow, 'tis wholesome for you. — Well, what's the Matter with you, my Dear?

Wid. Oh, a Stitch in my Side, but 'twill away in Time.

Cut. Pox o' the Stitch, you are young enough; but a little too much given to romping. I know your Tricks well enough; you dance naked in a Morning, 'till you catch Cold — But look to't, *Jenny*, take care that her Wedding Smock be well air'd.

Wid. Truly, Captain, I would fain ask my Friends Advice first. — One that has seen so little of the World, would be glad, you know, to have their Friends Counsel.

Cut. I hate good Advice, Widow. Let 'em call it Rashness, our Youth will excuse all.

Wid. Well, Sir, you know where Marriages are made, — 'tis not my Fault, — *Jenny*, look for one of my Cheek Teeth, that dropt under the Bed this Morning.

Jane. Yes, Madam, and must I stop it with Salt?

44 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS

Wid. Yes, and fling it into the Fire.

Cul. I have brought Musick, they shall give us a Flourish; and Ladies, let us have a Dance before the Wedding.--

[*Flourish.*]

Wid. Ah! This Musick makes my Blood dance in my Veins.

Bel. Come, Madam, will you make one in a Dance?

Wid. I have made one in a *Morris* before now.

Cul. She Dance! She'll totter like an old Oak in a Storm.—I'm afraid too much Motion will over heat your Blood. What say you, Widow, will you venture?

Wid. Verily, I will; for I don't think it wholesome to stand idle.

[*Dance; at the End she falls.*]

Cul. What's the Matter?

Wid. 'Tis nothing, I am us'd to it: I am taken so every now and then; once in fifty Years, or so; but 'twill over; lead me in.

Cul. Come, my little Love, the Sound of the Wedding Fiddles will fright it away. Strike up Scrapers. [*Musick plays 'em off.*]

[*Exeunt*]

Bel. Ha, ha, O glorious Impudence. Then must this Fellow run away with the Wealth of the Family, while so many honest brave Gentlemen starve upon half Pay.

Ben. I don't know how we can prevent it; for now she is grown old enough to fancy her self young enough for a Husband; nor does she make any Distinction in Men, for I find all are alike to her.

Bel. Like one that has lost his Taste, tho' he keeps a good Stomach — therefore for the good of us all, I will recommend her a Husband, if we can but put her off from this Fellow. Oh, here comes two Friends of mine; one of these is the Man.

Enter Mac Morris and Fluellin.

Flu. By Cheshu, I think if the Peace is hold much longer, the true and ancient Laws and Prerogatives of the Wars will be lost.

Bel. Gentlemen, your Servant. — Ladies, let me present you these two Friends

Friends of mine; this is Captain *Flnu-ellin*, and this Captain *Mac Morris*.

[*They salute the Ladies.*]

Flnu. Flnu-ellin is her Name, hur cares not who knows it, and hur was born at *Monmouth*. Hur is not asham'd of her Country, look ye.

Ben. A barve Man need not be asham'd of any Country.

Bel. These two Gentlemen are Brother Officers of mine; we have march'd together thro' Heat and Cold; and if Merit were any Title to Preferment, they should be Generals. But Fortune will bestow Preferment where 'tis least deserv'd.

Ben. That is a sure Sign that Fortune is blind.

Flnu. Fortune is painted plind, to signifie to you, look ye, Madam, that Fortune is plind; that is the Humour of it. And she is also painted with a Wheel, to signifie to you, that she is turning and inconstant; and Mutability, and Variation. — And her Foot, look you, is fix'd upon a Stone, which rowls, and rowls. — In good Truth, Fortune is an excellent Moral.

Mac. Hark'ee, Honey dear, who are both these two Ladies?

Bel. You shall know before we part. How d'you like them?

Mac. Upon my Shoul I like their sweet Faces; I could be after making a Child upon 'em both now.

Enter Widow, led by Jane.

Bel. Brush up, Captain, this is the Old Widow that must be your Wife: You see she's ripe Fruit, if you don't gather her she'll fall.

Wid. Hark'ee, Children, as soon as I dispose of my self in Marriage, I will likewise see you both provided for: I wonder where's Mr. Meagre, he is a wealthy careful Young Man—But who are all these? The Captains Friends come to the Wedding, I suppose.

Bel. Come, Gentlemen, salute the Widow, and wish her Joy, Make much of her, *Fluetlin*, if you can win her, you take twenty thousand Pounds by the Hand. [*They salute the Widow.*]

Wid. I thank you Gentlemen, Heavens bless you, it revives me to be made much of.

Flu.

Flu. When the Ceremonies and the Weddings is done, that is when we are married, I will wish you Joy—That is the Humour of it.

Wid. What, does he talk of Joy, Jenny?

Jane. Madam he says he won't wish you Joy, till he has married you.

Wid. What is this the Captain? I protest I did not know him. How a Body may be mistaken—Let me see my Spectacles, Jenny,—A goodly fine Gentleman truly; but Jenny, I think this is not Captain *Cutberin*.

Flu. Captain *Cutberin* is a lousy scald Knave, but hur is a Gentleman; and look'ee, I will marry you for the Antiquities of your Floods. By Chesu I think she is as ancient as *Cadwalladar* hur self.

Wid. What does he talk of Love, Jenny?

Jane. Yes Madam—he says he is a Gentleman of a great Family, and that he well marry you.

Wid. Let me see my Spectacles again—a handsome Gentleman, Jenny, is he not?

Jane.

Jane. Yes indeed Madam, a great deal handsomer than Captain *Calverin*, and I'm sure will make a better Husband.

Flu. If it be with your good likings, look you, I will give you Kifs, to signify to you, that I will Love you, and Marry you, that is the Humour of it. *[Kisses her much.]*

Wid. O Sir, you stifle me. I have not had so much Comfort these three-score Years.—He will make a goodly Husband, *Jenny*—I profess I don't know but Marriages are made in Heaven; and if the Gentleman be in Love with me, I would not be cruel, *Jenny*.

Jane. Yes, Madam, he's vastly taken with you.

Wid. Oh, I shall be so fond of him, I shall grow Young again.

Bel. Come *Fluellin*, you and I will walk off, and get a Licence and a Parson this Minute. *Mac Morris*, do you stay here, and talk to Miss; she's worth your while. Ladies, you'll excuse us.

[Exeunt.]

Cha. And are you a Captain Sir?

F

Mac.

50 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Mac. Indeed am I ; and all my Fathers and Mothers before me were Captains ; and I will be after making you my Wife, my dear Honey.

Cba. That's pure. Then I won't marry that nasty great Fat Man.

Enter Culverin.

Cul. Well, how does my old Doe ? I long for Night, that we may marry and go to Bed together..

Jane, Indeed Sir, you are come too late ; my Mistress is engag'd, I can tell you.

Cul. How ! engag'd ! Zounds she is not married sure ?

Jane. No, Sir, but she has promis'd her self to another, and it won't be in your Power to break it.

Cul. the Devil it won't ! what my old Buff, you are not inconstant, I hope you han't forsaken me ?

Wid. Why truly, Captain, you staid so long, I did not know what to think — and you know when a Woman is set upon a Thing, she must have it.

[*Coughs.*

Cul.

Cnl. Sharp set that's all. Come in my Dear, and I'll do your Bus'ness in a Minute. [*leads her out.*]

Ben. What shall we do now, *Jenny*?

Jane. Nay, I don't know: You see all that we have been doing is undone here in a Minute. Now will she be as fond of him as she was of t'other.

Enter Culverin.

Cul. Ha, ha, a very good one faith. — Promis'd to another! And pray Mrs, *Pin-sticker*, what damn'd impudent Fellow was it, that presum'd to address where I did?

Jane. No impudent Fellow at all, Sir, but a very honest Gentleman, Captain *Fluellin*.

Cnl. Ha, ha, I thought it had been some such Puppy; A Welsh Fool! When I see him I'll beat his Leek about his *Welsh* Pate.

Mac. Hark'ee Honey Dear, I will give you a Crown of my own Monies to break his Pate.

Cnl. Let me see it; I'll do it. [*gives it him.*]

F 2.

Mac,

52 *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Mac. Upon my Shoul now, and indeed I believe you lye, my Dear ; and if you do not break his Pate, I will be after breaking yours.

Cul. I believe this Fellow won't fight, I'll bully him. *(aside)* You break my Pate ! Zounds, Sir, I have cudgel'd your whole Nation.

Mac. Ha, what list my Nation ? Is my Nation a Villain and a Jack Sauce and a Rascal ?—say what list my Nation : As Crisf shall save me, I will cut of your Head. *[draws.*

Cul. Sir my Sword is out of order, or else, Sir.

Mac. Then take a bit of this—there. *[Canes him.*

Cul. Tis very well, Sir.

Mac. Upon my Shoul now you *Lee* ; 'tish not well, 'tish very ill, and Sores and Bruises ; and I will give you another Stroke for that *Lee*.—Remember, now, that an *Irish* Man can Cudgel as well as you ; tho' you can't cudgel at all.

Cul. I shall be with you presently, Sir, I'll get my Sword mended, and then woe be to you. *[Exit.*

Mac. Get your Pate mended you lousy Rapparee.

Ben.

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 53

Ben. I beg Captain, you'd find out your Friends, and hasten them back, lest this Fellow should prevail upon our Grandmother to marry him immediately.

Mac. Upon my Shoul I will be in the Race all the Way, and bring them with me before I come back. [*Exit.*

Cha. What do you send my Sweet-Heart away for, Sister? you would not like to be serv'd so your self.

Ben. My dear, you'll have him again presently — Here comes one of my plagues; how shall I do to get rid of this Wretch?

Enter Loadham.

Loa. Your Servant Ladies, your Servant, Well, Madam; have you consider'd on't? I told you, Madam, I never was in Love before, and if you wont have me, I never will again. Think on't between this and Dinner, for my Stomach begins to come, and fasting does not agree with me.

Ben. You are very short Sir.

F 3

Loa.

54 *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Loa. Look ye, Madam, Love is as bad to me as a Fast Day: I waste, me-thinks; and if I could help it, I would lose nothing by you.

Ben. You are extremely resolute me-thinks.

Loa. Sure, Madam, you have more Sense than to marry that Scrag, *Meagre*, a thing made up of Leather and Bones: If you should, I can tell you your Fate. — In a Month I shall see you running, in a Morning, to the Chambers of some able Counsel, to sue for a great Belly; whereas if you marry me, here's something to feed upon. I find you don't know me, Madam, I am provident.

Ben. That is to say, you take Care of your self.

Loa. I, Faith, and so I do.

Enter Jasper.

Jas. Forsooth, my Master, Mr. *Meagre*, order'd me to give you this Note.

[*Exit.*

Loa. Reads.] *Meet me immediately— Satisfaction for the Affront — Sword and Pistol, without Seconds. — What's the*

the meaning of this? A Challenge from *Meagre*!

Ben. If you have any Value for me, I desire that you will chastise that Fellow who is my Aversion. — As you acquit your self in this, like a Man of Honour, you may expect my Favour.

Loa. I'll slice his Soul at any other Time; But it happens at this Hour I shall be a little busy.

Ben. I know you're a Man of Honour: Therefore setting Ceremony aside you shall go this Minute. (*Pushes him out.*) So, I'm luckily got rid of this Fellow, now 'tis time to see what's become of our old Parent. I must forbid the Banns there, till *Bellayr* and his Friend are come; for he is so pretty a Fellow, that I would do any thing to enlarge his Fortune. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

S C E N E V. *The Street.**Enter Culverin and Meagre.*

Meag. **B**UT Captain, I hope you'll stand by me, in case he should meet me?

Cul. He'd as soon meet the Devil; a Bulrush would fright him. — I tell you, he has no more Courage than a Militia Captain.

Meag. But, Captain, I am no fighting Man my self, and perhaps he knowing that may venture to come.

Cul. He would not venture to come and Dine with you, for fear you should eat him. I tell you, he is a perfect Poltroon; he was made an Officer in the right Valiant the Artillery Company, for his great Belly; and you know 'tis against their Constitution to have a Man in the Corp that will fight. Go and wait for him a while, and your Mistress shall know how brave you are.

Meag.

Meag. The Weight of this Sword draws me awry. I shall walk with my Head side-ways, looking at it, like a Dog that has a Stick fasten'd to his Tail. Well, I'll venture, Captain; but you'll go with me.

Cul. I must call upon old Orthodox, the Parson, for I'm going this Minute to be married; so you may only walk there a little for Form sake, and then come victorious, and see your Mistress.

Meag. Well, I will venture. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *The Fields.*

Enter Loadham and Jaspar.

Loa. BUT art thou sure the Rat, thy Master, has no Courage?

Jas. Courage to kill nothing but Mice, and that not fairly neither; he catches 'em in Traps, and then eats 'em.

Loa. But are you sure he never fought in his Life?

Jas. The last Time he was in the Fields, a Boy of six Years Old beat him with a Cat-stick.

Loa.

58. *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Loa. Then I will slice him. — But hark ye, *Fasper*, what makes you live with that Scrub? Why don't you change your Master?

Fas. Sir, I should be very willing to sell my Place, if you did but know of any Body that would buy it.

Loa. Thou shalt live with me, and see Plenty, if thou wilt.

Fas. Ay, with all my Heart, Sir.

Loa. Then 'tis agreed from this Minute.

Fas. I do agree to live with you, Sir, for I have a great Aversion to Famine.

Loa. This is the Place appointed. You must serve me as a Scout. Look out before, and bring me Word here if he be coming.

Fas. Yes, Forsooth, — Sir, I see one lying upon the Ground, a good way off.

Loa. Is there so? — Then we'll steal off before we're discover'd. I don't like a Man that lies perdue: Besides, there may be three or four of a Heap, for ought we know — I'll sneak off.

Fas. O, no, Sir, this is a Horse.

Loa. Hang him, a cowardly Rogue, I knew he would not come: But look again; is the Coast clear now?

Jas. I see nothing, Sir, but One, Two, Three, Four, Five. —

Loa. Five! O Treachery! I'm set to be murther'd! 'Tis Valour now to run away.

Jas. O, they are Windmills.

Loa. Ha, ha, — and yet you would perswade me I was set.

Jas. Who I, Sir?

Loa. Yes — I find you're a damn'd Coward: — But fear nothing, *Jasper*, I have a Sword, and when I draw it, woe be to them that provoke me. O *Jaund*, he's here! What shall I do now?

Enter Meagre.

Meag. I am ready to sink. — Would I could sneak off.

Loa. I am too fat to run away; what shall I do? Oh, he trembles, he's afraid--then I'll be a little bolder.

Mea. That I should be such a Fool to challenge him!

Loa. Draw, Spider, draw.

Mea. What need we be so rash; let us confer a little.

Loa. Confer! me no Conferings; I won't compound with you for less than

than a Leg or an Arm; then draw I say.--
Why dost thou not draw?

Mea. Sir, I intend to give you Satisfaction.

Loa. What, with Words, Weazel? No, I will give thee as many Wounds as there are in a Surgeon's Sign; which done, mind what I say, I will divide thy Quarters — hear and tremble — and put thee into a Tub and pickle thee: Then this Cacodemon there, that was thy Servant, whom thou didst starve, shall, in Revenge, eat thee up, devour thee, and grow fat with thy Flesh.

Jas. I thank your Worship heartily.

Mea. I am a dead Man, that's certain.

Loa. Nay more, when thou art dead, I won't leave thy Soul in Quiet — for I will go streight to thy House, break open they Chests, and scatter thy Gold and Silver, which is thy Soul. — Then summon all thy Debtors, and give them back their Bills, Bonds, Indentures, and Mortgages.

Mea. I'm in the Hands of a Lyon; I shall die intestate too, and no Body will know what is become of me.

Loa. Draw, Vermin, or this Minute is thy last.

Mea.

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 61

Mea. But, Sir, Sir, is there no Remedy. [*Draws his Sword a little.*

Loa. *Jasper*, He shews his Sword.

Jas. You'll make him fight this way whether he will or no.

Loa. I've gone too far. — But let me see, suppose I should be inclin'd to Mercy — What Reparation can'st thou make? First, thou shalt upon thy Knees ask Pardon for thy Rascality, before my Mistress — Then thou shalt give a Treat too at thy own Charge, to the Twenty Four Companies.

Mea. I find he's afraid as well as I, then I will come off Cheaper — That may not be, Sir.

Loa. Come, hang it, I am Compassionate in my Nature; you shall only own your self a Rascal under your Hand, and that shall satisfy me.

Mea. He's a Coward, I see it — No, I defy thee.

Loa. What a Dog was I to provoke him! I don't like his Countenance, he has a murdering Look.

G

Mea.

62 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

Mea. I know I shall kill thee. I imagine I see thee stretch'd, covering half an Acre of Ground; now I'm apprehended for thy Murther——Now the Constable is carrying me to *Newgate*——Now I am in the Sessions-House——Now I am call'd——Not Guilty my Lord——The Jury have found it *Billa vera*——Now, now comes my Sentence.

Loa. You shall only ask my Pardon by word of Mouth.

Mea. Now I'm in the Cart, riding up *Holbourn-Hill*——There goes a proper Fellow, says one——A handsome Fellow, says another——'Tis Pity so fine a Man should come to be hang'd, says a third——Ay, now I am come to the Tripple-Tree.

Loa. This need not be, you see I am willing.——

Mea. Now, now, I feel my Toes drag along the Cart, now 'tis drawn away——Good People all, Pray for me——Now, now I'm gone.

Loa. Would I were off with asking him forgiveness.

[*aside.*

Mea.

Mea. Why dost not come on,
Guts? *[at a Distance.]*

Loa. Now I think on't, I won't
come on, 'tis not an equal Match—
I am a larger Mark——Do you feed
till you are as fat as I am, and then
I'll fight you.

Mea. You mully Puff fat Rascal,
do you think that will content
Me?

Loa. I had best deliver up my
Sword to appease him——Because I
see you have Spirit, and dare use a
Sword, I'll make you a present of
this Blade.

Mea. But now, Puff, I must kick
your Guts out.

Loa. What, after I am disarm'd?

Mea. Yes, Sirrah, now I may beat
him with Safety——Take that, and
that.

Loa. 'Tis very well, this is Ho-
nour. *[Exit with Jasper.]*

Mea. I could have kick'd him at
first, if I had known he was such a
Coward. But, Madam *Benedict* shall

64 *The Half-Pay* OFFICERS.

know this: I think 'twill do my Business with her effectually. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VII. *The Widow's House.*
Enter Benedict and Jane.

Ben. Where is my Grand-Mother,
Jane?

Jane. Extremely busy in her Closet, but not with her Lawyer about her Marriage Settlement; That she has no Thought of, but with her Glass, luting Colours to her Complexion, and fancying her Dress.

Ben. Then this impudent Fellow will certainly gain his Point, if *Bell-ayr* and his Friends don't prevent him.

Jane. I fear 'twill hardly be in their Power, Madam.

Ben. She tells me, she's resolv'd to settle her whole Family at once, and that we shall be married at the same Time she is. She has fix'd at last upon Mr. *Meagre* for me, as being the worthiest Person; for she says his Grandfather was her first Love, and
Miss

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 69

Miss Charlotte is to marry the great fat Fellow.

Jane. You'll be sweetly pair'd both of you : But you may get rid of one of them by this Quarrel.

Ben. I suspect they are no fighting Men : But if the Shame on't keeps 'em away, 'tis the same thing.

Enter Loadham.

Loa. Your Servant, Madam. — Well, I've done the Business.

Ben. How done the Business ? What, you ha'n't kill'd Mr. *Meagre* ?

Loa. Kill'd him ! No, Madam, I could not get the Cowardly Rogue to fight, so I was forc'd to be content with kicking him, that's all. — O Laud.

Enter Meagre.

Mea. What, is Paunch got here before me ? I find he can be very nimble when he is to run away.

Ben. How, Sir, run away ?

66 *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Mea. Yes, Madam, I invited him to combat with me, for affronting me before you; but the Monster had not the Courage of a Mouse; he cried, have Mercy on me; therefore, after I had oblig'd him to surrender his Sword, I profess, in my Anger, I kick'd him.

Ben. How, Sir, — Is this true?

Loa. All a Lye. I made him a Present of a Sword out of Good Will; that's all, Madam.

Ben. I find you can't agree which was Conqueror, and I hate a Coward: Therefore I think there's no Way to decide it, but by fighting again.

Loa. Fighting again! O Laud! What shall I do now? Well, Sir, I shall expect you at the same Place immediately. — I'll hide in this Corner till he's gone. [Exit.

Ben. Mr. Meagre, I know you're a Man of more Spirit than to refuse his Challenge, therefore I say, whoever behaves himself most like a Man of Honour, has me. [Exit.

Mea.

Mea. What does she mean, Mrs. Jane?

Jane. Bless me, Sir, don't you understand her?

Mea. Verily not I.

Jane. Then I'll tell you. You must know that the old Lady is at last come to a Resolution, that Mr. Loadham shall have Madam Benedict, and you Miss Charlotte: Now as she likes you much better, she would have him dispos'd of out of the Way, you understand me; that is, you should kill him.

Mea. Then I shall be dispos'd of out of the Way too, sweet Heart. But is there no other Expedient?

Jane. Yes. Why did not you offer to marry her privately? You know you're sure of her Fortune. What, I warrant you expect to be ask'd first.

Mea. Odd, if I thought she would consent.

Jane. I know she would. — Say no more, but go this Minute, and wait for her at Covent-Garden Church Door

68 *The Half-Pay OFFICERS.*

Door, and she shall disguise her self and meet you.

Mea. How I shall laugh at this greasy Fool *Loadham* !

Jane. Away, I say, and make no Delay. [*Exit Meag.*

Enter Benedict.

Ben. What Bargain is that you're making for me?

Jane. In short, Madam, I'm going to provide for my self. 'Tis now Evening-Prayers, and by the Help of a long Hood, I intend to take this Grievance off your Hands. 'Tis all for your Sake. [*Exit.*

Ben. Well, I wish you success.

[*Loadham peeps.*

Loa. Is he gone yet? (*Enters*) Where is this cowardly Raggamuffin, this Rawbone Skeleton; I have waited for him this Hour, and the Rogue has hid himself in the Chink of some Door, or the Crevice of a Wall, I suppose? If I catch

catch him, I'll pin him into an Augur Hole.

Ben. What, Sir, did he not meet You?

Loa. Meet me! No, Madam; Now I hope you are convinc'd the Rogue has nothing in him but Bones; no Heart at all, Madam; Ever while you live, a fat Man for a Man of Spirit; when we are put to Action we smoak it.

Enter Culverin, Widow and Miss.

Cul. [*sings*] How bright my Dear looks, and how this Wedding Suit becomes her. Don't my Dear and I look very young and very pretty? We shall run about the House billing and cooing like a couple of tame Turtles. — I hope to kill her in two Days for all that. (*aside.*

Wid. Ah, you're a goodly merry Man, and the Comfort of my Heart. Who is that, Mr. Loadham? I am going to take a Help Meet, going to be married; 'tis what

what we must all come to. Here *Charlotte*, where is the Child? *Mr. Loadham* take her; she shall be yours; I will dispose of my Family to Day.

Cha. Psha, indeed I won't have that great ugly Man, so I won't.

Loa. This! What shall I do with her? Put her in my Pocket. She's a pretty Thing enough to be kept in a Cage, to hop about and divert one with her Prattle.— But pray do you chuse her for me, because you think we're like one another? Do you think she and I can ever tally together? No, no, I'm for no such unnatural Conjunction, — it portends something ominous.

[*Exit.*

Wid. Where is this young Man, *Mr. Meagre*? That we may be all married together — I have not seen so happy a Day, since I was Nine and Forty.

Enter

Enter Bellayr.

Cul. Bellayr, your Servant. Observe how gay my Dear and I are upon our Wedding Day.

Bel. If you mean in your Dress, I confess it is gay enough, but methinks you should have put on a clean Shirt upon your Wedding Day.

Cul. What do you mean? Why I have Linnen, Sir.

Bel. Yes, as much as will fill a Tinder Box.

Cul. Let me tell you, Sir, that it is ill Jesting upon a Man's Shirts, when he has none.

Bel. What, are you out of Humour, Sir?

Cul. No, Sir, I scorn to be out of Humour for a Jest. — This *Bellayr* will Fight, or else I would kick him, to let my Wife see my Courage. [*aside.*] But I wonder where's that Welsh Bitch that set up for my Rival? Ha, ha, very good

good that. But I can Laugh to think how. I shall curry his old Coxcomb, when I meet him.

Bel. But it happens that he do's not love beating.

Cul. Not love beating! A cowardly Rogue! — But the Bravery of a Welshman is, that he has Courage enough to eat a Leek. I never met with any that dare Fight me. — But what a Plague makes old Homily stay so long — I must run in and hasten him.

[*Exit.*

Ben. What must be done in this Case, Captain?

Bel. I met the Parson as I came in; he's an honest Gentleman, and my Acquaintance, and I engag'd him not to appear till he should hear from me.

Wid. Captain, where are you? Well, my Love, is the Canonical Hour come? [*Taking Bellayr by the Hand*] Make haste, for I have not stood so long these Thirty Years.

Ben.

Ben. She takes you for him; she can't distinguish without her Spectacles.

Enter Fluellin, with a Leek in his Hat, and Mac-Morris.

Bel. Why do you wear your Leek to Day, *Fluellin*, St. David's Day is past?

Flu. There is Reasons and Causes why and wherefore in all Things. I will tell you as my Friend, Captain *Bellayr*, the rascally, scald, peggary, lousy, praggings Knave *Culverin*, which you and your self know, and all the World know to be no petter than a Fellow, look you now, of no Merits, is send me Word, look you, that he will peat my Leak about my Pate; so I will be so bold to wear it in my Cap, till I see him, and then I will tell him a little Piece of my Desires.

Bel. Here he comes, swelling like a Turkey Cock.

H

Flu.

Fla. I care not for his swellings nor his Turkey Cock.

Enter Culverin.

Cot pless you, Captain *Culverin*, you lousy, pitiful Rascal, Cot pless you.

Cul. Stand off, old *Flaellin*, the smell of thy Leek makes me qual-mish.

Fla. Therefore I do pray and pefeech you heartily, you scurvy, lousy Knave, at my Desires, and because your Affections, and your Appetites, and your Digestions do not agree with it, to eat this Leek.

Cul. I eat a Leek! I would not come within the smell on't for all the Goats in *Wales*.

Fla. There is one Goat--*[beats him]* Will you be so good and so kind to eat it now, you Knave.

Cul. *Welsh* Raggamuffin, thou shalt dye for this. But you know where you are.

Fla.

Flu. You say true, scald Knave, I shall dye when Cot's Will is—— but I will desire you to live, and eat your Victuals when you can get it, and there is Sauce for it [*beats him*]. If you can mock a Leek, you shall eat a Leek.

Cul. Hold, Captain, consider I am a Gentleman.

Flu. If you were as ancient a Gentleman as the Devil is, or as Lucifer and Beelzebub himself, look you, you shall eat this Leek.

Cul. I shall spue, that's certain. And must I eat then? —— Well, by this Leek I'll be reveng'd.

Flu. Hark'ee, lousy scald Knave, here is Six-Pence to buy a Plaister, to heal your Pate.

Cul. I'll take it in Earnest of Revenge.

Enter Sharp.

Sharp, Sir, [to Bel.] The Doctor desires to know if he must stay any longer—— Ha! *Harry*; is not that

H 2

Harry

Harry Brags! 'Tis he — How do'st thou *Harry*? — Lord how you're disguis'd in good Cloaths! I swear I hardly knew you.

Bel. What, is this Gentleman an Acquaintance of yours?

Cul. Pox o' the Acquaintance, would I were out: My Marriage is spoilt, and now I may go and hang my self.

Sha. Yes, Sir, we were Acquaintance formerly, but by an unlucky Accident he was forc'd to take a trip to the *West-Indies*.

Bel. How forc'd?

Sha. Only for levying Money without Authority of Parliament, that's all. He and some other Gentlemen took great Delight in walking in the Fields on an Evening; and if the People that they happen'd to meet did not deliver their Purfes, they us'd, out of a Frolick, to knock 'em down and bind 'em — and the Sowre Judges, that hate all polite Diversions, had like to have hang'd 'em for't.

Omni.

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 77

Omn. An errant Foot-pad!

Wid. What's all this, about the Captain, Child!

Ben. The Captain you were going to marry is found out to be a Highway Man, and has been condemn'd for Robbing.

Wid. A Highwayman! Who could have thought it? Where are my Spectacles? Yet he is a goodly Man.

Cul. A Fox confound you all. [*Exit.*

Ben. Your Husband is run away from you, Madam.

Wid. Is he? 'Tis Pity indeed; I'm sorry for't.

Flu. Look'ee, Widow, I pray and pefeech you, look you, to Understand that I am descended from the ancient Family of the *Fluellins*, who was a mightier, and greater, and better Shentleman than any in the whole World; I don't Care who knows it, that I will marry you for your Antiquities, look you, that is the Humour of it.

Wid. What do's he say, Child?

Ben. The Gentleman says he's willing to marry you immediately.

H 3

Wid.

78 *The Half-Pay Officers.*

Wid. Does he! Ha, Ha, —
Blessing light upon his Heart for
it. — Well, I cannot do without
a Comforter, and we are com-
manded to marry and multiply our
Kind. — Where's *Jenny*, let her
get Things ready.

Enter Jane and Meagre.

Mea. How's this, am I trick'd,
cheated, undone! Married to a
Bundle of cast Cloaths!

Ben. How's this, Sir, married my
Chamber Maid! Nay then, what
shall I do? Madam, I've lost my
Love, Mr. *Meagre* has stole a Match
with *Jenny*.

Flu. Then I do peseech you,
look you, that of your good Graces
and Likings, you would marry
my Friend Captain *Bellayr*, who is
a fallarous Shentleman, and of great
Knowledge in the Directions of the
Wars; and likewise and moreover
that this little Lady would marry
my Friend Captain *Mac Morris*,
who

The Half-Pay OFFICERS. 79

who is as prave and stout, and as good a Shentleman as *Marc Antony* is — If it be with the good Opinions and Likings of my Wife.

Wid. It shall be your Way, for the Husband is Head. It is agreed my Love.

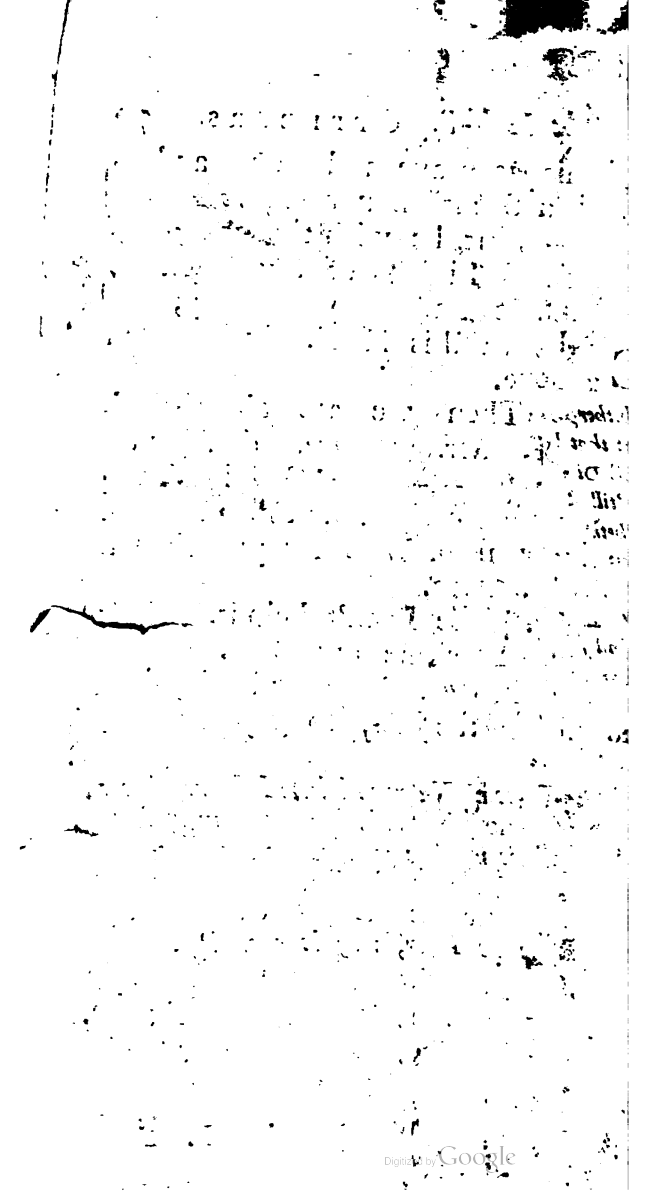
Ben. Then we are all agreed. Prithee, Mr. *Meagre*, don't you stand out. — The Girl is Virtuous and good Humour'd, and will make a fitter Wife for you than a Gentlewoman.

Mea. Since I can't help it, I must agree. So come my Dear.

Bel. Now we're all pleas'd, let's Dedicate the Day to Joy.

*Since Love all Nature with its Influence cheers,
And Hymen lights his Lamp at Ninety Tears;
If well we manage each revolving Hour,
Long may we hope to feel Love's pleasing Power.
Let Stoicks call it Dotage --- Our Die is cast,
If Love be Folly, may it ever last.*

Exeunt.





P I L O G U E,

Spoken by Mrs. Mountford.

*YOU' D Poets but foresee how Plays would take,
Then they cou'd tell what Epilogues to make;
Nor to thank or blame their Audience most:
What late Knowledge does much Hazard cost,
Once are thrown, there's nothing won, nor lost.
Like the Thief has stol'n, he cannot know
Whether he shall escape the Law, or no.
But Poets run much greater Hazards far,
Than they who stand their Trials at the Bar;
The Law provides a Curb for its own Fury,
And suffers Judges to direct the Fury.
But in this Court, what Difference does appear!
For every one's both Judge and Fury here;
Nay, and what's worse, an Executioner.
All have a Right and Title to some Part,
Each choosing that in which he has most Art.
The dreadful Men of Learning all Confound,
Unless the Fable's good, and Moral sound.
The Vixen-Masks, that are in Pit and Gallery,
Approve, or Damn the Repartee and Rallery.
The Lady Criticks, who are better read,
Inquire if Characters are nicely bred;
If the soft things are penn'd and spoke with Grace:
They Judge of Action too, and Time, and Place;*

}}En

EPILOGUE.

*In which we do not doubt but they're discerning,
For that's a kind of Affignation Learning;
Beaus judge of Dress; the Wulings judge of Songs;
The Cuckoldom, of Ancient Right, to Cits belongs.
Thus poor Poets, the Favour are deny'd,
Even to make Exceptions, when they're Try'd.
'Tis hard that they must ev'ry one admit:
Methinks I see some Faces in the Pit,
Which must of Consequence be Foes to Wit.
You who can Judge, to Sentence may proceed;
But tho' he cannot Write, let him be freed
At least from their Contempt, who cannot Read,*

F I N I S.



